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# Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling

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**1999 Annual Report**

Missouri Council on Problem  
Gambling Concerns, Inc.

Missouri Department of Mental  
Health

Missouri Gaming Commission

Missouri Lottery

Missouri Riverboat Gaming  
Association

## Alliance Member Representatives

### Representative

Kevin P. Mullally, *Chairman*  
Jeanne Galliher, *Vice-Chairman*  
Rick Salinas, *Secretary*  
Gary Gonder  
Keith Spare

### Organization

Missouri Gaming Commission  
Missouri Department of Mental Health  
Missouri Riverboat Gaming Association  
Missouri Lottery  
Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns

# Alliance Mission

*The Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling was formed to heighten public awareness of the dangers of problem gambling and promote the availability of treatment for those who suffer from a gambling problem. The Alliance will promote responsible gambling and work to educate the public about the dangers of problem gambling. Furthermore, the Alliance will organize and promote problem gambling prevention and treatment alternatives for all Missouri citizens. Finally, the Alliance will promote prevention and education programs for Missouri's youth.*

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# Alliance Brings Public, Private and Nonprofit Groups Together to Work on Problem Gambling Issues

A variety of gaming opportunities are available to Missourians including bingo, lottery, and riverboat casinos. The vast majority of those who choose to gamble do so responsibly and do not experience personal problems or adverse consequences.

However, some of those who gamble experience personal, financial, and social difficulties that can be devastating to individuals and destructive to families. The final report of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission found that the range of adult lifetime pathological gambling is somewhere between .6 percent and 1.5 percent.

The truly serious nature of problem gambling merits programs of public education, prevention, intervention, and treatment. In response, the **Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling (Alliance)** was formed in December 1997. This unique conglomerate of public, private, and nonprofit organizations recognizes the need to address the social problems and costs that are created when some individuals, regardless of their number, have problems handling the product or service that the state and gaming industry provide.

The objective of the Alliance is to heighten public awareness of the dangers of problem gambling and promote the availability of treatment for those who

suffer from a gambling problem. The members of the Alliance believe that the responsibility for preventing and responding to problem gambling is a shared function of those who provide opportunity for gaming, those who regulate it, and those who provide treatment services. Membership in the Alliance includes three state agencies: **The Missouri Lottery, the Missouri Gaming Commission, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health**. Additionally, two nonprofit corporations are also governing members: **Missouri Riverboat Gaming Association, Inc.** and the **Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns, Inc.**

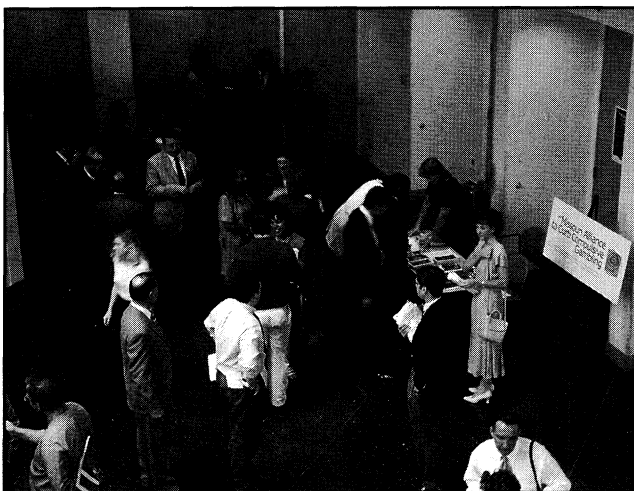
## ALLIANCE GOALS

The goal of the Alliance is to create a comprehensive problem gambling program based on cooperation of the interested parties. Through education, awareness, and treatment programs, the organization hopes to achieve:

- Increased knowledge on the part of citizens about where and how to get help for a gambling problem, either for oneself or for others;
- Increased public understanding of the nature and prevalence of problems among those who choose to participate in gaming activities;
- Improved understanding of problem gambling issues in the context of current public policy as it is formulated by the legislature and other policy-making bodies; and
- Increased understanding that problem gamblers can be helped with effective treatment programs.

## ALLIANCE PLAN

1. A toll-free number is answered immediately by a live counselor trained in crisis intervention and referral. The phone number is publicized throughout the state as the single point for crisis



The Alliance hosted its first Responsible Gaming Education Week in August 1999.



calls, referral to treatment services, or information related to compulsive gambling problems.

2. Public education posters and pamphlets are distributed to lottery retailers, mental health counseling centers, consumer credit counseling agencies, and riverboat casino locations. The posters provide a toll-free telephone number for problem gamblers or concerned individuals to call for information or help. The pamphlets describe the symptoms of a gambling problem, methods for preventing gambling problems, the availability of free treatment, and also include the toll-free telephone number.
3. A statewide media campaign of television and radio public service announcements is used to better inform the public of the dangers of problem gambling and where people can get help. Marketing to local outlets is an important component of the initiative, as well as the production of educational videos.
4. The development and distribution of public awareness and training programs for gaming and lottery employees, mental health counselors, and other professional groups also is integral to the plan.
5. There is also a coordinated effort to attain sufficient funding levels to provide appropriate education, prevention, and treatment services throughout the state.

## MEMBER ROLES

### Missouri Council on Problem Gambling

The Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns, Inc. was organized in August 1996 and is a member of the National Council on Problem Gambling. The Missouri Council's president serves as the affiliate chair of the National Council. The Missouri Council has developed a 60-hour training program that meets the National Council standards for compulsive gambling counselors training. In addition, the Missouri Council has provided advanced counselor training programs for Missouri's certified

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compulsive gambling counselors.

The Missouri Council also provides ongoing education through public education presentations to probation officers, rehabilitation programs, schools, and churches. Furthermore, the Missouri Council has been active in working with radio, television, and newspaper media to provide information on problem and compulsive gambling. Most recently, the Missouri Council provided baseline training on problem and compulsive gambling to Missouri Lottery staff in Kansas City, St. Louis, Springfield, and Jefferson City.

The Missouri Council's vision is "Missourians working to advocate a gaming-neutral response to problem and compulsive gambling concerns." The Missouri Council's goal is to address problem and compulsive gambling through prevention, harm reduction, and increased awareness of its impact. The Missouri Council assists those who are impacted by problem and compulsive gambling through promoting or providing quality education, service referrals, and accessible treatment as well as training and research resources for professional development.

### Missouri Department of Mental Health

Missouri's riverboat gaming law authorized the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to establish outpatient centers to treat problem gamblers and their families. The Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse established the Compulsive Gambling Counseling Program which maintains a cadre of certified compulsive gambling counselors and a network of outpatient clinics where problem gamblers and family members may receive free counseling.

DMH manages a program that provides free treatment for any Missouri resident who suffers from a gambling problem.

DMH also manages a program that provides free treatment for any Missouri resident who suffers from a gambling problem. In conjunction with the treatment program, DMH administers a compulsive gambling counselor certification system.

In order to assist diagnosing gambling problems, DMH developed a short-list of questions to help determine if someone may have a serious problem with gambling. The list is reproduced in the pamphlets produced by the Missouri Lottery and distrib-

uted to casino employees and patrons, mental health counseling centers, and lottery customers and retailers.

DMH also prepares the annual budget estimates for funding the treatment services, reimburses local outpatient providers for services rendered, and monitors the quality and utilization of treatment services.

### Missouri Gaming Commission

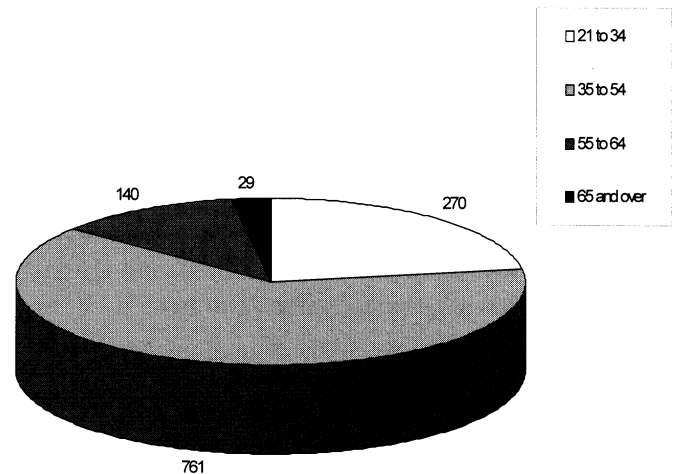
The Missouri Gaming Commission (MGC) administers a voluntary exclusion program for problem gamblers. This unique program, created in 1996, provides problem gamblers with a method to acknowledge that they have a gambling problem and take personal responsibility for it by agreeing to stop visiting riverboat casinos. The exclusion is for life. Research indicates that problem gambling is a lifetime condition and those who suffer from it are never “cured” but are constantly “recovering”.

In order to assist the problem gambler with their self-imposed ban, the Commission requires casino operators to cease all direct marketing efforts to people in the voluntary exclusion program. Casinos are required to block all direct mailings and other promotional enticements to people in the program. This policy ensures that people in the program do not receive invitations for free nights in the casino’s hotel, free dinners, match play coupons, or other inducements to visit the casino. In addition, the Commission requires that casinos refuse to allow people in the program to cash checks or participate in player’s club programs.

The Commission provides a list of qualified treatment counselors and GA meetings to everyone who enrolls in the program at the time they complete the application. Gamblers Anonymous is a nonprofit volunteer organization that helps problem gamblers to recover. To obtain more information about GA meetings in your area, call 1-888-BETSOFF or go to the GA website at: <http://www.gamblersanonymous.org/>

If a problem gambler who has requested to be excluded chooses to violate their agreement and visit a Missouri casino, they are arrested for trespassing upon discovery. As a method of enforcing this policy, the Commission requires casinos to refer to the list of people in the program before issuing new player’s club cards, cashing checks, or paying out large jackpots.

Voluntarily Excluded Problem Gamblers  
Total Since 1996 by Age Group



The Commission uses the trespassing arrest as a way to call attention to the problem gambler’s destructive behavior in the hope that it will encourage them to enter a treatment program. After receiving notice of the arrest of someone who is voluntarily excluded, the Commission sends a letter reminding them of their commitment to refrain from visiting Missouri casinos and reminding them of the availability of free treatment. The Commission also provides them with another list of Gamblers Anonymous meetings in their community.

The voluntary exclusion program is not for everyone. It is not a panacea or a quick fix for problem gamblers. The vast majority of people who suffer from problem gambling need counseling or group therapy such as Gamblers Anonymous. However, the voluntary exclusion program can be an important part of an overall recovery program. Many people find that blocking the direct marketing efforts of the casinos and the consequence of being arrested for trespassing are helpful components in their ongoing recovery.

In addition to administering the voluntary exclusion program for problem gamblers, the Commission serves as the Alliance’s liaison with the home dock communities who have funded the counselor training and reimbursement program administered by the Department of Mental Health. Section 313.842, RSMo., encourages local governments that host

riverboat casinos to contribute to the Compulsive Gamblers Fund. The fund is used to provide outpatient services for compulsive gamblers and their families.

The Commission's role has been to communicate with the home dock communities about the importance of the need to provide services for compulsive gamblers and their families. To date, nearly all of the home dock communities have participated in the program and have contributed \$515,000 to provide counselor training and treatment services for compulsive gamblers.

### Missouri Lottery

Promoting the 1-888-BETSOFF help line is a significant component of the Missouri Lottery's responsible gaming program.

In addition to producing and printing 1-888-BETSOFF posters, the lottery produces and prints brochures that focus on the nature and symptoms of gambling-related problems and the 1-888-BETSOFF help line. The brochure and posters are made available at more than 5,000 lottery retail outlets, Missouri riverboat casinos, and mental health-care providers.

The lottery also produces radio and television public service announcements, which are disseminated to stations throughout the state. The symptoms of problem gambling and promotion of responsible gaming are regular topics on the lottery's "Lottery Minute" radio program and during the "What's News" segment on the Lottery's weekly game show, "Fun & Fortune." The public service announcement also is played regularly during advertisement breaks on the Lottery's game show.

The lottery also created a "Play Responsibly" campaign to help remind lottery players that lottery tickets are only games and for entertainment value. "Play Responsibly" is often used in conjunction with the 1-888-BETSOFF campaign. The "Play Responsibly" campaign includes several components:

➤ The "Play Responsibly" message, along with the 1-888-BETSOFF help line number, can be found on the back of Scratchers tickets, number-games tickets, and playslips;

➤ "Play Responsibly" stickers are placed on instant ticket vending machines, Pull-Tab vending

machines, and number-games terminals;

➤ "Play Responsibly" advertisements are shown on television and heard on the radio during high jackpot runs;

➤ The "Play Responsibly" message and toll-free help line are included regularly in lottery's publications such as the "Retailer Connection" and the "Winning Times"; and

➤ The "Play Responsibly" message is printed in lottery game brochures.

Another method the lottery uses to communicate the "Play Responsibly" campaign is through its Web site: [www.molottery.com](http://www.molottery.com). Information concerning the Alliance and problem gambling also are featured on the Web site, which has between 30,000 and 50,000 visits each month.

In 1999, the lottery produced a 12-minute educational video on problem gambling and Missouri's responsible gaming programs and treatment. This video has been made available to the media, public groups for speaking engagements, gaming-employee training, and problem gambling counselors.

Underage gaming also is a concern of the Missouri Lottery. Stickers reminding players that the minimum age to buy lottery tickets is 18 are placed on vending machines, on the back of all lottery tickets, and in lottery brochures. Retailers are routinely reminded that the law prohibits sale of lottery products to anyone under the age of 18 and are encouraged to ask for proof of age whenever they are not certain.

The symptoms of problem gambling and promotion of responsible gaming are regular topics on the lottery's "Lottery Minute" radio program and during the "What's News" segment on the Lottery's weekly game show, "Fun & Fortune."

In 1999, the Missouri Lottery became a charter member of the Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns, in order to further promote problem gambling education to anyone who gambles in Missouri.

## Missouri Riverboat Gaming Association

MRGA funds 1-888-BETSOFF, a statewide telephone crisis line and referral service for problem gambling. The phone line provides immediate crisis response and referral to the statewide network of outpatient gambling clinics and certified compulsive gambling counselors. The phone line is managed by Life Crisis Services, a provider of quality intervention services, primarily by telephone, with emphasis on caring support for callers and treatment referrals.

MRGA member firms have specific programs designed to address responsible gaming issues at their facilities. All Missouri riverboat casino companies have an employee designated as director of responsible gaming programs. MRGA's Responsible Gaming Program is comprised of three components: Operation Bet Smart, which focuses on compulsive gambling; Project 21, which addresses underage gambling; and alcohol awareness programs to promote responsible consumption of alcohol. The goals of these components are to create awareness inside the various casinos, get employees involved in addressing the issues, create awareness outside the casino and in the communities, and provide resources for those who need help.

There are a variety of tools used by MRGA member firms to create awareness of responsible gaming issues. MRGA casinos display 1-888-BETSOFF on posters and pamphlets produced by the Missouri Lottery in strategic locations throughout the property. All Missouri casinos display posters communicating key messages in high-traffic customer areas

MRGA's Responsible Gaming Program is comprised of three components: Operation Bet Smart, which focuses on compulsive gambling; Project 21, which addresses underage gambling; and alcohol awareness programs to promote responsible consumption of alcohol.



and employee back-of-house areas. These areas include casino entrances, ticket counters, cashier cages, cash access machines, and employee break rooms and time clocks.

All casinos provide employees with informational training on responsible gaming subjects. Missouri casino companies have a mission statement illustrating the purpose in deterring problem and underage gambling. Recognizing the importance of getting employees involved early, responsible gaming is part of orientation for all new hires. The training programs teach a wide range of responsible gaming issues, including how to identify the signs and symptoms of compulsive gambling, tips on spotting underage customers, and ways to prevent intoxication in the serving of alcohol.

A variety of other methods are utilized to communicate responsible gaming issues to employees including employee newsletters, fliers, and employee

### Identifying Underage Patrons

CASINO VISITORS	ID CHECKS	% of Total	REFUSED ENTRY	% of Total	% of Checked
24,400,000	1,793,400	7.35%	25,500	0.10%	1.42%



contests. The American Gaming Association (AGA), a national trade association of the gaming industry, publishes the *Responsible Gaming Resource Guide* and *PROGRESS (Promoting Responsible Gaming Resources & Education Standards)* which encourages the development of industry-wide programs and policies. In response, MRGA has adopted the AGA's voluntary advertising guidelines. Materials such as the *Responsible Gaming Resource Guide* and the *PROGRESS* kit are incorporated into the training provided to all casino employees.

Additionally, AGA promotes research in disordered gambling and underage gambling through the National Center for Responsible Gaming based in Kansas City. Several Missouri casinos provide ongoing financial support for the research by the National Center. Missouri casinos recognize that dealing with disordered and underage gambling is not only the right thing to do, it is also good business.

Finally, MRGA encourages patrons to establish their own limits and provide direction to others by developing a set of *personal guidelines* to determine whether, when and how much to gamble. Personal guidelines should be developed with the following precepts in mind:

**1. The decision to gamble is a personal choice.**

No one should feel pressure to gamble, or feel that he or she must gamble to be "accepted."

**2. Gambling is not essential for having a good time.**

Gambling should not be perceived as a necessary ingredient for having fun with friends and family.

**3. What constitutes an acceptable loss needs to be established before starting to gamble.**

Money spent on gambling should be considered an entertainment cost; people should only gamble with money they can afford to lose. Borrowing money to gamble should be discouraged.

**4. There are times when people should not gamble.**

Never gamble if you're younger than the legal gambling age; when it interferes with your work or family responsibilities; when in recovery for addictive disorders or dependencies; when the form of gambling is illegal; when you have had too much to drink; or when attempting to make up for prior

gambling losses ("chasing" losses).

**5. There are certain high-risk situations during which gambling should be avoided.**

Avoid gambling when feeling lonely, depressed, angry or under stress; when coping with the death of a friend or family member; to solve personal, family or financial problems; or to impress others.

## Alliance Focuses on Underage Gambling

Alliance members recognize that young people are also susceptible to problem gambling. A study prepared for the National Gambling Impact Study Commission found that the rate of at-risk gambling in adolescents is nearly double the adult rate. In response, Alliance members have special programs in place to address the underage gambling issue.

Each year, MRGA awards college scholarships to high school students whose poster, essay, or video presentation best conveys a message deterring underage gambling. In 1999, MRGA awarded eight such scholarships. The goal of the Project 21 Scholarship Program is for young people to educate their peers that it is not permissible in Missouri for persons under the age of 21 to gamble at a riverboat casino.

MRGA members are diligent in checking for underage persons who may attempt to enter riverboat casinos. During calendar year 1999, approximately 1.8 million identifications were checked by casino

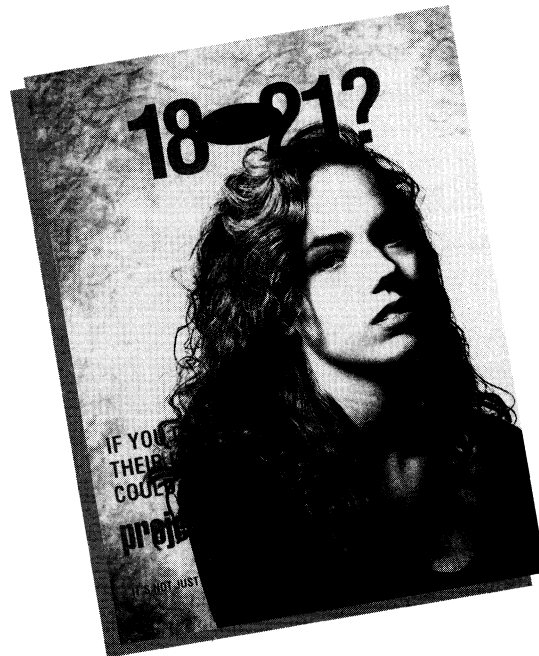
personnel. During the same period, Missouri casinos hosted more than 24 million patrons and 25,500 persons were refused entry. This is accomplished through an aggressive age identification policy, which verified the age of more than 7% of all visitors to Missouri casinos.

Additionally, all casinos have an established protocol regarding the issue of unattended minors on-site. Missouri casinos have a no-tolerance policy for unattended minors in unsupervised areas of the casino property.

The Missouri Lottery also works to keep its retailers aware of underage persons who may attempt to purchase lottery tickets. Missouri Lottery encourages its retailers to ask for identification when they are in doubt of a customer's age.

Both MRGA and Missouri Lottery utilize sign programs to remind their personnel and the public about underage gambling.

**In 1999, the Missouri Gaming Commission arrested 282 minors for presenting false identification on a riverboat casino. The Alliance continues to pursue legislation making it a crime for anyone underage to gamble.**



## 1-888-BETSOFF PROVIDES 24-HOUR ASSISTANCE FOR PROBLEM GAMBLERS

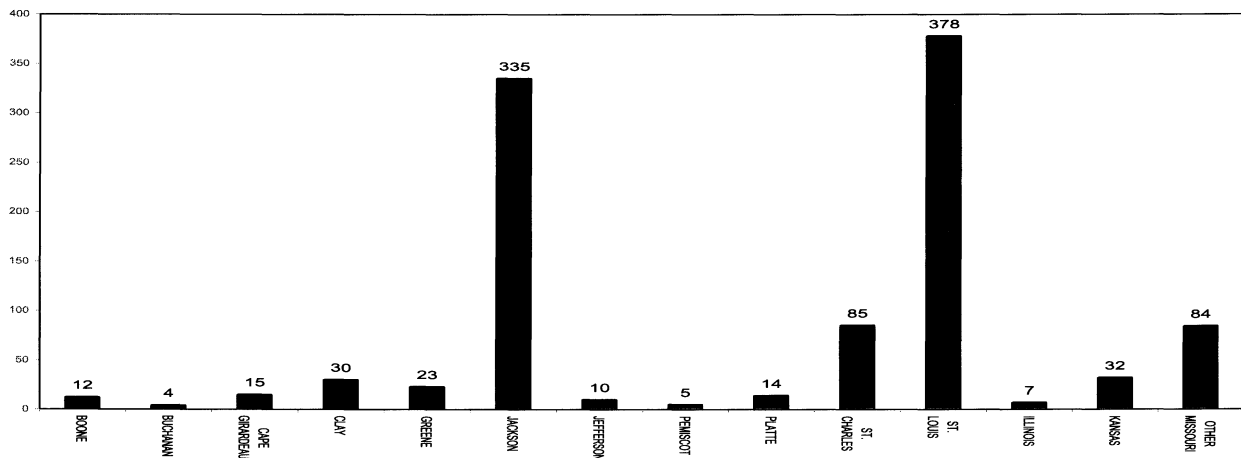
1-888-BETSOFF is a statewide telephone crisis line and referral service for problem gambling. The phone line is answered by a live operator 24-hours per day and provides immediate crisis response and referral to the statewide network of outpatient gambling clinics and certified compulsive gambling counselors. The 1-888-BETSOFF phone line is managed by Life Crisis Services of St. Louis, a professional counseling and referral agency with over 30 years of experience in crisis intervention.

During calendar year 1999, a total of 5,434 calls were received by Life Crisis Services, but only 1,034 were callers seeking assistance or information

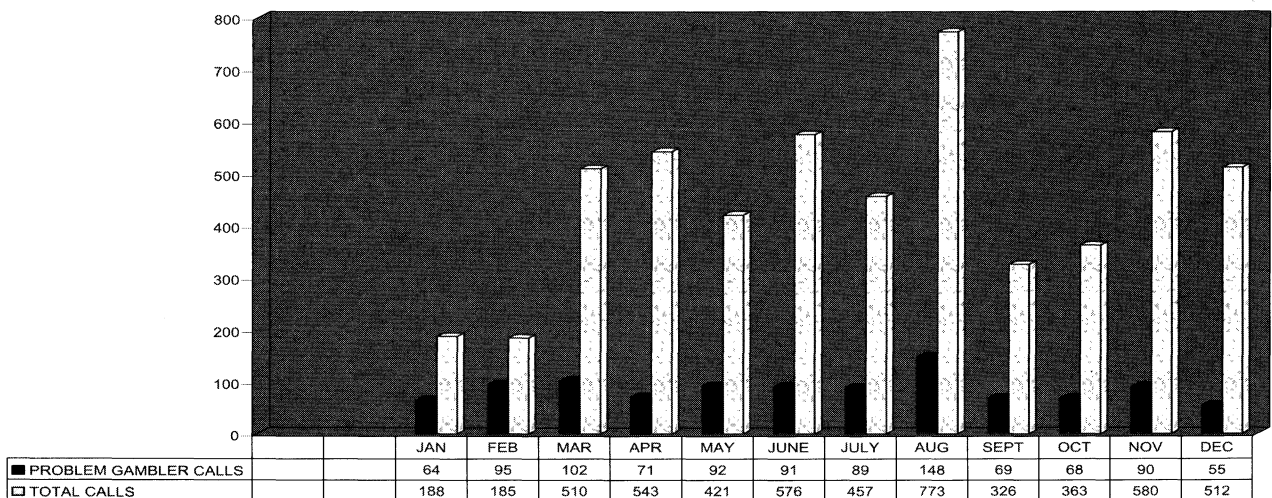
about problem gambling. More than 80% of the calls were hang-ups, pranks, or callers seeking information about gaming.

Call volume has increased in comparison to 1998, when there were 3,498 total calls received by Life Crisis Services, with 871 calls concerning problem gambling. The Alliance believes that this increase is evidence that outreach efforts have raised public awareness about 1-888-BETSOFF and its purpose, leading to increased usage by persons truly needing assistance. Call volume to 1-888-BETSOFF continues to be well below expectations and the amount planned by MRGA.

**CALLERS BY COUNTY**



**1999 CALLS BY MONTH**



## Alliance Sponsored Responsible Gaming Education Week Debut Receives National Attention

Missouri's first Responsible Gaming Education Week was held August 2-6, 1999. Established by the American Gaming Association in 1998, Missouri became the first state in the nation to recognize the week on a statewide basis.

The Alliance used this week as an opportunity to launch a comprehensive information campaign for raising awareness of problem gambling issues. As a major component of that campaign, the Missouri Lottery purchased 338 television spots and 674 30-second radio advertisements for the 1-888-BETSOFF crisis line. Awareness of the phone line increases the knowledge on the part of citizens about where and how to get help for a gambling problem.

The week was highlighted by seminars held in St. Louis and Kansas City. The seminars featured numerous distinguished speakers, including Keith Whyte, executive director of the National Council on Problem Gambling, Drs. Linda Cottler and Renee Cunningham-Williams of the psychiatry department of the Washington University (St. Louis) School of Medicine, and Christine Reilly, executive director of the National Center for Responsible Gaming.

Whyte praised the Alliance and Missouri's comprehensive approach to attacking problem gambling as



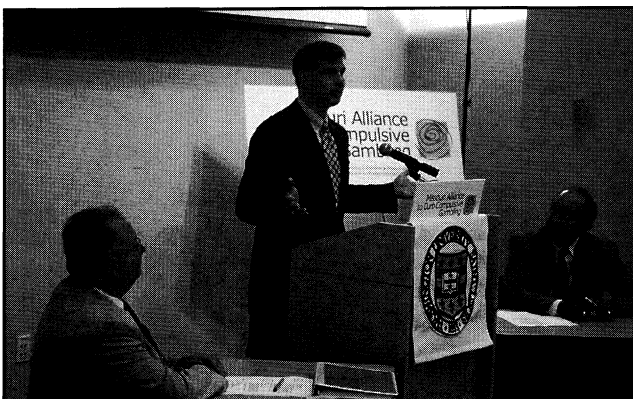
Problem gambling researchers discuss their ongoing work during RGEW. From right to left are Keith Spare, Keith Whyte, Christine Reilly from the National Center for Responsible Gaming, and Dr. Linda Cottler and Dr. Renee Cunningham-Williams, both from the Washington University School of Medicine.

a model for the other jurisdictions to emulate. He stressed the importance of education and prevention as well as treatment. Whyte said that we cannot gain ground in the attack on any affliction by "treating only the casualties."

Governor Mel Carnahan signed a proclamation signifying the week as Missouri Responsible Gaming Education Week. In addition, cities throughout the state issued proclamations recognizing the week. Many Missouri newspapers and television stations covered the seminars. In conjunction with Responsible Gaming Education Week, some newspapers printed responsible gaming editorials that were submitted by members of the Alliance.

Missouri's Department of Mental Health distributed information kits to compulsive gambling counseling providers throughout the state. Department officials also gave a number of radio

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National Council on Problem Gambling Executive Director Keith Whyte addresses the media during Responsible Gaming Education Week as Division of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Director Michael Couty (right) and Keith Spare, President of the Missouri Council on Problem Gambling, look on.



and television interviews.

The Missouri Lottery developed an educational video on problem gambling. The video explained problem gambling along with its symptoms and prevalence statistics. It also included information about the programs offered by members of the Alliance for problem gamblers and their families. The video was presented at each of the seminars. The Lottery also promoted responsible gaming information in lottery retail locations.

Keith Spare of the Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns provided in-service training on problem gambling to Missouri Lottery personnel. The participants received training on how to recognize compulsive gambling and guidance on making treatment referrals.

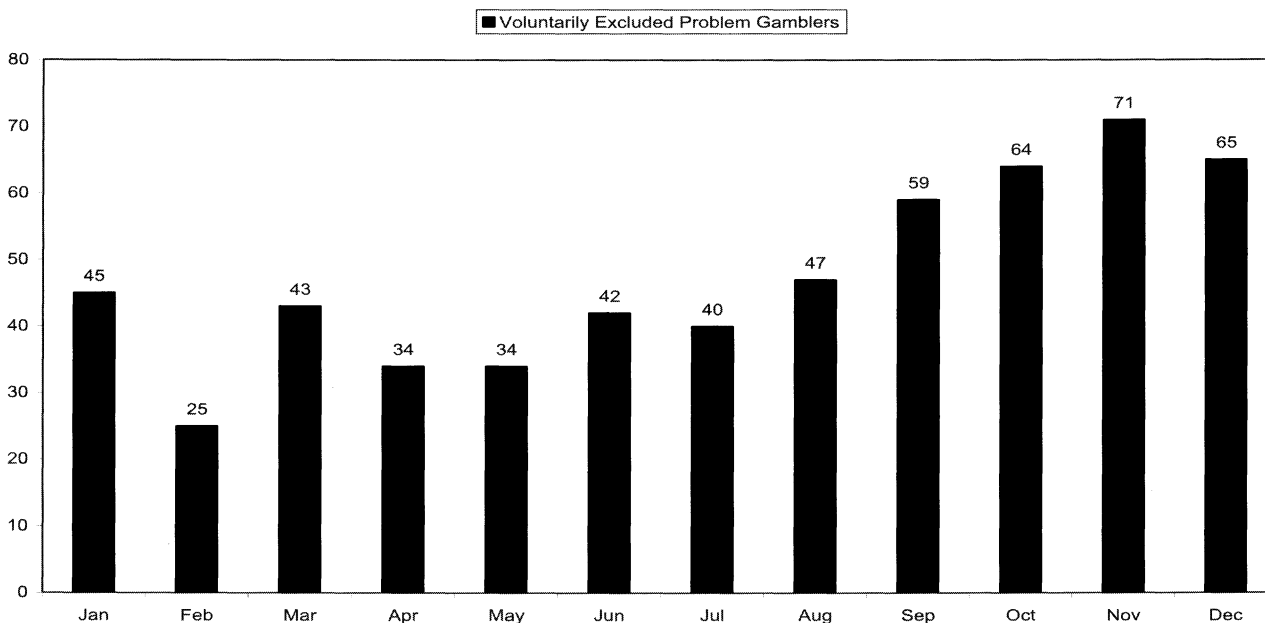
The Missouri Gaming Commission conducted training seminars for casino employees regarding the Commission's Voluntary Exclusion Program. MGC also introduced a new brochure for the program for

distribution to riverboat casinos, credit counseling agencies, public libraries, and treatment counselors.

Each of the member firms of MRGA conducted training sessions for their employees on disordered and underage gambling during Responsible Gaming Education Week. MRGA members used a number of communication methods to raise awareness for the week, including company newsletters, fliers, paycheck inserts, bulletin boards, commemorative chips, buttons and ribbons, e-mail notices, speaker presentations, and banners. The responsible gaming training sessions for employees promoted responsible gaming resources and education standards at the gaming venues.

MRGA members used a number of communication methods to raise awareness for the week, including company newsletters, fliers, paycheck inserts, bulletin boards, commemorative chips, buttons and ribbons, e-mail notices, speaker presentations, and banners.

**Voluntarily Excluded Problem Gamblers**  
Calendar Year 1999 by Month



As the chart above indicates, Responsible Gaming Education Week had a dramatic effect on the number of people entering the Missouri Gaming Commission's voluntary exclusion program for problem gamblers. The Commission's program is designed to shield problem gamblers from the direct marketing efforts of casinos. The program requires the gambler to acknowledge their problem and take personal responsibility for it. The Commission strongly encourages all persons in the program to seek treatment.

# Free Counseling for Problem Gamblers

## Mental Health Treatment

Missouri's riverboat gaming law authorized the Department of Mental Health to establish outpatient centers to treat compulsive gamblers. The Department's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse maintains a cadre of certified compulsive gambling counselors and a network of outpatient clinics where problem gamblers and their families may receive free counseling.

The Division utilizes program providers from its existing network of treatment facilities. Staff at these facilities with expertise in serving clients with substance abuse problems receives the gambling addiction training and certification.

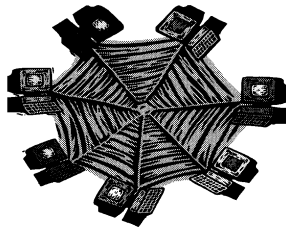
Treatment agencies provide outpatient counseling to compulsive gamblers and their family members at no cost to the individual receiving services. Program providers must employ a certified compulsive gambling counselor who has received Division-approved training.

Counselors make an initial determination of eligibility through the use of a brief screening instrument. They then administer more in-depth assessments to those they identify as eligible for services.

The providers are reimbursed for their services through the program office in Jefferson City. All services must be prior authorized and the maximum reimbursement rates are pre-set. A primary reviewer conducts a clinical review process for authorizing requests.

Presently, there are 22 agencies throughout Missouri that have contracted with the Division to provide outpatient counseling to compulsive gamblers and their families. Such agencies are located in Cape Girardeau, Clinton, Columbia, Des Peres, Farmington, Festus, Hayti, Independence, Joplin, Kansas City, Kennett, Kirksville, St. Charles, St. Joseph, St. Louis, St. Louis County, Salem, Springfield, and Troy.

## Important Web Sites



### Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling

<http://www.888betsoff.com>

### Gamblers Anonymous

<http://www.gamblersanonymous.org>

### Missouri Department of Mental Health

<http://modmh.state.mo.us/ada/facts/gambling.htm>

### Missouri Gaming Commission

<http://www.dps.state.mo.us/mgc/index.htm>

### Missouri Lottery

<http://www.molottery.com>

### Missouri Riverboat Gaming Association

<http://www.mrga.org>

### National Council on Problem Gambling

<http://www.ncpgambling.org>

### National Institute of Mental Health

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>

**Associated Press**

It's only 1 percent, that's

Whyte spoke at a seminar on compulsive gambling sponsored by the Missouri Alliance to Curb Compulsive Gambling. The alliance is made up of state agencies and groups with ties to gambling — the state Department of Mental Health, the Missouri Lottery, the Missouri Gaming Commission and the Missouri Riverboat Gaming Association.

tion. The event opened Responsible Gaming Education Week in Missouri, which runs through Friday.

"This is an equal-opportunity disease. There is no one who can't get caught up in this," Whyte said. "It's the hidden addiction. There are no track marks. It's not on the breath."

There are many studies of compulsive gambling, but none was based on a common set of assessments or used a set of standard definitions, said Linda Cottler, a psy-

chaity professor at Washington University. Most of the information is anecdotal; it comes from calls and treatment, she says.

"There is not one stu-

"If you don't have an assessment that is reliable and valid, you have no idea of the true rate of pathological gambling," Cunningham said.

**You can  
an epi  
casualt**

In addition, the attendees

because compulsive or habitual gambling affects more than just the person doing the gambling, help is available for families as well as the gambler," said Michael Coutu, director of the Missouri Department of Mental Health's Division of Alcoholism and Drug

for Responsible Gaming. The center is spending around \$7 million on casino industry donations. The center is financing the behavioral research under way in this area on the causes and treatment of problem gambling.

The hard part, Reilly says, is getting through the typical addict's multiple afflictions: substance abuse and depression, and then understanding the relationships and root causes. "Neta Jasper agrees," says a person in the field. "The person is coordinated, but it's a hell of a lot of work."

AS I SEE IT  
to red

fore You Start." Designed to encourage players to set betting limits prior to play, the program has been adopted by many other casinos.

In addition, Harrah's was the first to implement the state's new self-exclusion policy. Harrah's employees identify themselves as "problem gamblers" and are then placed on a list of individuals who are not allowed to gamble at the casino.

Designed to curb betting limits, the program has been adopted by other casinos. In addition, Harrah's was the first riverboat in the state to implement a formal self-exclusion policy. When players identify themselves as problem gamblers, they can exclude themselves from all Harrah's Entertainment (Harrah's, Rio and Showboat) properties across the country. Our self-restriction program has been adopted and expanded by Missouri Gaming Commission and Associated Persons. Harrah's has no problem with the program.

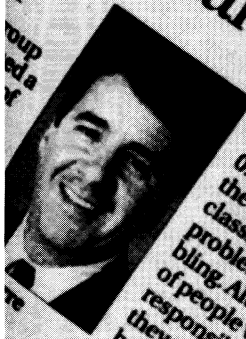
across the country. Our self-restriction program has been adopted and expanded by the Missouri Gaming Commission for its Disassociated Persons program, which also assists problem gamblers. ■ *Underage gaming:* Though some people are offended when they are asked to show proper identification to enter a casino, most understand the importance of this practice. by Harrah's in 1989 — no employees, mi- guardians ab- bling

**Underage gaming:** ■ Assists problem people are offended who asked to show proper identification before entering a casino, most stand the importance of this project 21 — an educational initiative introduced by Harrah's in 1989 — teaches casino employees, minors, parents and guardians about the consequences of gambling under the legal age.

# Problems

...those City to toughen the law. Casinos  
partnered with No. 1. Unattended children: The  
work hard to provide a safe environ-  
ment for our customers, though, ul-  
timately, the responsibility for children  
and minors lies with their parents. The  
American Gaming Association and the  
National Center for Missing and Ex-  
ploited Children have teamed up to  
educate and advise parents about cas-  
no companies' zero tolerance for fail-  
ure to take responsibility for children.  
When Harrah's came to the Klamath  
area, we promised to be a responsible  
citizens and to give back to the com-  
munity. The responsibility for children

**Casinos take steps**



That's why the gaming industry leads funding for research of disordered gambling since 1996 to the National Responsible Gaming Association. This association with the Missouri Lottery agencies to address problem gambling. For example, the hotline, 1-888-BET-need help. The education and Operation Stop Betting.

Missouri Alliance to Curb Problem Gambling  
P.O. Box 104591  
Jefferson City, MO 65110